

Carver School



Just two blocks north of this location along Fayette Street (named for the Marquis de Lafayette who visited Alexandria in 1824), near the southwest corner of Queen Street, stood the Old Powder House, dating from 1791 -1809. On the same spot, the Carver School, an African American nursery school, was built in 1944 and restored in 2014.



Marquis de Lafayette

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The wood-frame Carver School was built at the same location in 1944, under the auspices of National Defense Housing Act of 1941. Using federal funds offered during World War II, the school operated as a segregated school for African American children. By February 1946, when federal support began to decline, the two professional teachers at the school, Lucille G. Smith and Velma D. Leigh, were notified that they must assume all janitorial duties at the school including cleaning the building and maintaining the furnaces each day. When it became clear that white instructors working in other Alexandria schools were not subjected to this order, the teachers resigned within several days. The school closed in 1950 and the building became the William Thomas branch (Post 129) of the American Legion, named after the first African American from Alexandria to die in battle during World War I. By 2010, the building was vacant and neglected and was finally preserved in 2014 after a close call with demolition.

The Powder House structure was built in a rural area far outside Alexandria in the late 18th century due to the dangers associated with the storage of gunpowder in populated areas. In January 1791, the Common Council passed an ordinance notifying the inhabitants of Alexandria that "...a house is now ready for the reception of powder under the care of Mr. John Yost..." and required that all gunpowder be deposited at that location within one week. Seven months later, a more permanent structure was required and in July of the same year the Council offered a contract to construct "...a powder house on ground belonging to Charles Alexander, Esq. near the Rope Walk. The building is to be made of brick 16 feet wide, 30 feet long, 10 feet high in the clear and 18 inch walls. The bricks may be made on the spot."

↔ Shopping 🛍️

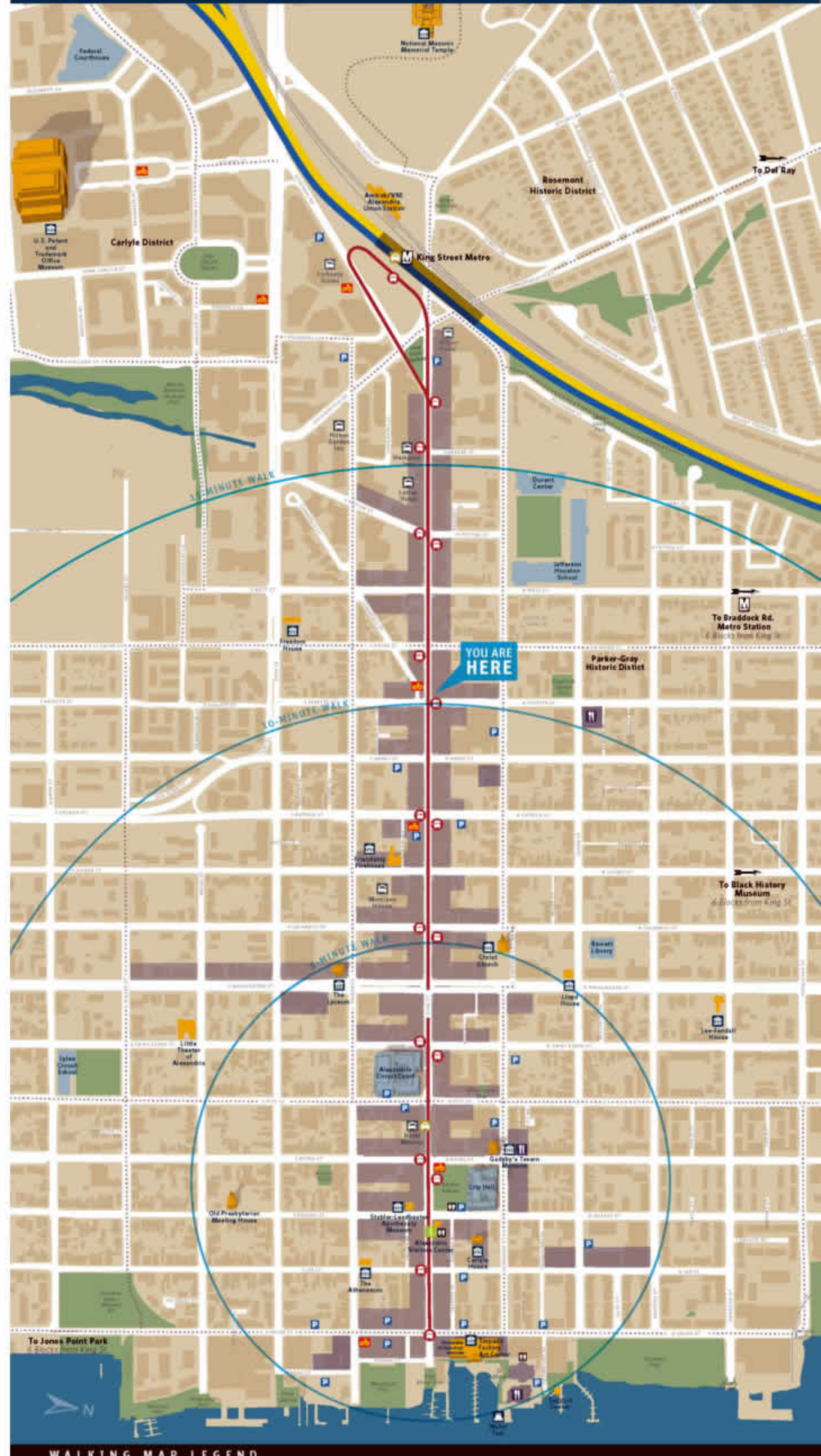
➔ Dining 🍴

➔ Parker-Gray Historic District

↪ Waterfront 🚢
14 BLOCKS

⬆ King Street 🚇
4 BLOCKS

Trolley Departs 🚋
Every 10-15 min.
Sun. - Wed. 10am-10:15pm
Thurs. - Sat. 10am-midnight



WALKING MAP LEGEND

- 📍 Information
- 🅅 Public Parking
- 🏛️ Museum
- 🏠 Shopping & Dining
- 🌳 Park
- 🚇 King Street Trolley Stop
- 🚕 Taxi Stand
- 🏨 Lodging
- 🚲 Bike Route
- 🏞️ Public Parks
- 🚏 MetroRail Station
- 🚖 Water Taxi
- 🚲 Capital Bikeshare
- 🚶 5-minute walk (1/4 Mile)
- 🏛️ Visitor Attraction
- 🏛️ Civic Destination